FLORA DANICA

A Royal Treasure

Hold an item of Flora Danica porcelain and you hold a little bit of Danish history in your hand. Each exquisite piece represents a story of royalty, diplomacy and deep respect; of the life's work of talented illustrators; of fine excellent craftsmanship and rare skills; of meticulous attention to detail and of precious porcelain. Dating back to 1790 and the golden era of porcelain, Flora Danica is one of the world's most exclusive and prestigious porcelain collections. Based on the extensive botanical encyclopaedia of the same name, each illustration is an accurate representation of the Danish wildflowers and plants of that time. Originally commissioned by the Danish King as a gift for Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, an enthusiastic collector of porcelain. Flora Danica was, and has remained a royal treasure ever since. To this day, the service is hand cast and hand-painted, just as it was more than 225 years ago. Intricate. Detailed. Ornate. And still as impressive and beautiful as it was when it was first created.

f/d

1761 - 1883

The history of the Flora Danica dinner service is interwoven with the history of the encyclopaedia of the same name on which the botanical motifs are based. The original Flora Danica encyclopaedia was first published in 1761 and was finalised approximately 122 years later, providing detailed overview of Danish botany of the time. The Flora Danica service has over 3,000 of these botanical illustrations available as motifs.

the year
1790

The story of Flora Danica took its beginning 15 years after Royal Copenhagen was founded. It was King Christian VII who ordered the service from the Royal Danish Porcelain Factory, located in the heart of Copenhagen. There are many historical indications that the service was intended to be a gift for Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. It had to be extraordinary. That it was. And still is.

In 1802, the Danish Crown Prince Frederik ordered the factory to discontinue production. The service was then entrusted to the court's confectioner of the Royal Household in January 1803 and inaugurated at Christian VII's birthday celebration in the same year.

the year
1803

the year
1863

In 1862 Prince Edward the 7th of Wales proposed to Princess Alexandra of Denmark; and they married in 1863. Since the princess had to leave her native country behind, the ladies of the Danish bourgeoisie wanted to give her a piece of Denmark to bring with her: a Flora Danica dinner service of no less than 765 pieces. The ladies carefully selected the flower motifs for each piece so that only the most appealing Danish flowers would adorn the dinnerware. And on every dessert plate the classic flower motifs were replaced with paintings of Danish castles and manors.

When, in 1964, Princess Anne-Marie, sister of HM Queen Margrethe II, married then King Constantine II of Greece, the Danish government decided to reinstate the former royal practice and present the couple with a Flora Danica service for 60 people.

the year
1964

the year
2004

The Danish Peoples' gift to HRH Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark and HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, at their marriage in 2004, was a Flora Danica dinner service featuring the young couple's new monogram, designed by HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, mother to the Crown Prince.

For a more detailed and chronological history,
please visit *floradanica.royalcopenhagen.com*

f/d

THE STORY BEHIND THE MOTIFS
OF FLORA DANICA

The delicate and elegant motifs that adorn the porcelain are hand-painted after the Flora Danica botanical encyclopaedia, produced by the same highly skilled and meticulous methods as they were at the end of the 1700s. One never tires of looking at these expressive plants, complete with leaves, stem, root or berries. The astonishing detail of the painting and the high quality of the porcelain make each piece an absolute treasure.

· ROYAL BEGINNINGS ·

The story of Flora Danica began in the age of enlightenment, a time when man sought rational knowledge and a deeper understanding of nature. King Frederik the 5th of Denmark commanded that all the plants within the Danish kingdom were to be put in a reference work, so they could be studied and their riches exploited. Georg Christian Oeder, a doctor and botanist was the first of a dozen people to be responsible for the project. In 1761, the first booklet was published, comprising 60 illustrations so exquisite that rumours of them travelled the world. Over the next decade, Oeder published a total of 10 similar booklets. The process was repeated, and 122 years later, it had grown into an impressive collection of 51 booklets and 3 supplements; an entire oeuvre with a total of 3, 240 motifs, that was entitled Flora Danica.

· A LABOUR OF LOVE ·

The task of translating these beautiful drawings onto the fine porcelain was mainly undertaken by a man with an extraordinary attention to detail, Johann Christoph Bayer. With distinctive and sensitive brushwork, he copied the illustrations of the Nordic wild plants from the Flora Danica encyclopaedia onto the precious porcelain. This enormous task was a labour of love and became his life's work.

On the opposite page is the safe in which original Flora Danica illustrations are carefully stored. Some of them dates back to the 1760's. Cotton gloves must be worn when handling these precious books.

f/d

· A GIFT FIT FOR ROYALTY ·

In 1788-1790, Russia and Sweden were at war. At the time Russia and Denmark were defence allies,but in the crucial hour Denmark failed to support the Russian army. Thus, the Danish King Christian the 7th had to make amends and come up with a reconciliation gift worthy of the Russian Empress. In 1790, he placed an order for a dinner set so magnificent, it would dazzle the whole world - and definitely an Empress like Catharine the 2nd, who was an enthusiastic collector of fine porcelain.

At that time, porcelain was an extremely precious commodity, considered “white gold”. Sadly, Catherine passed away before the service was completed some 12 years later, and thus the service remained in Denmark and was inaugurated by King Christian the 7th himself at his birthday banquet in 1803. Today, the first Flora Danica service is one of Denmark’s most important cultural treasures; seen as a constant tribute to the nature of Denmark and an exquisite example of Danish design and craftsmanship. The original Flora Danica dinner service, the world’s most comprehensive surviving service from the eighteenth century, and is exhibited at Rosenborg Castle, Christiansborg Castle, and Amalienborg Palace. To this date, Flora Danica itself remains one of the world’s most prestigious and precious dinner services still in production.

ROSENBORG CASTLE

where several items of the original Flora Danica service from 1790-1802 are exhibited.

THE FLORA DANICA SERVICE

f/d

TALES OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

Welcome to an exclusive tale about the creativity and craftsmanship behind Flora Danica. A journey from liquid clay to porous biscuit porcelain, including hand glazing, hand-painting of motifs, delicate gilding and the immense skill that goes into creating the final pieces. Beautiful and precious, like jewels for the table.

{FLORA DANICA}

f/d

TALE NO. 1

A single wrong cut, and the piece is ruined and must be discarded.

{THE ART OF CARVING}

· EVERY PIECE IS CARVED BY HAND ·

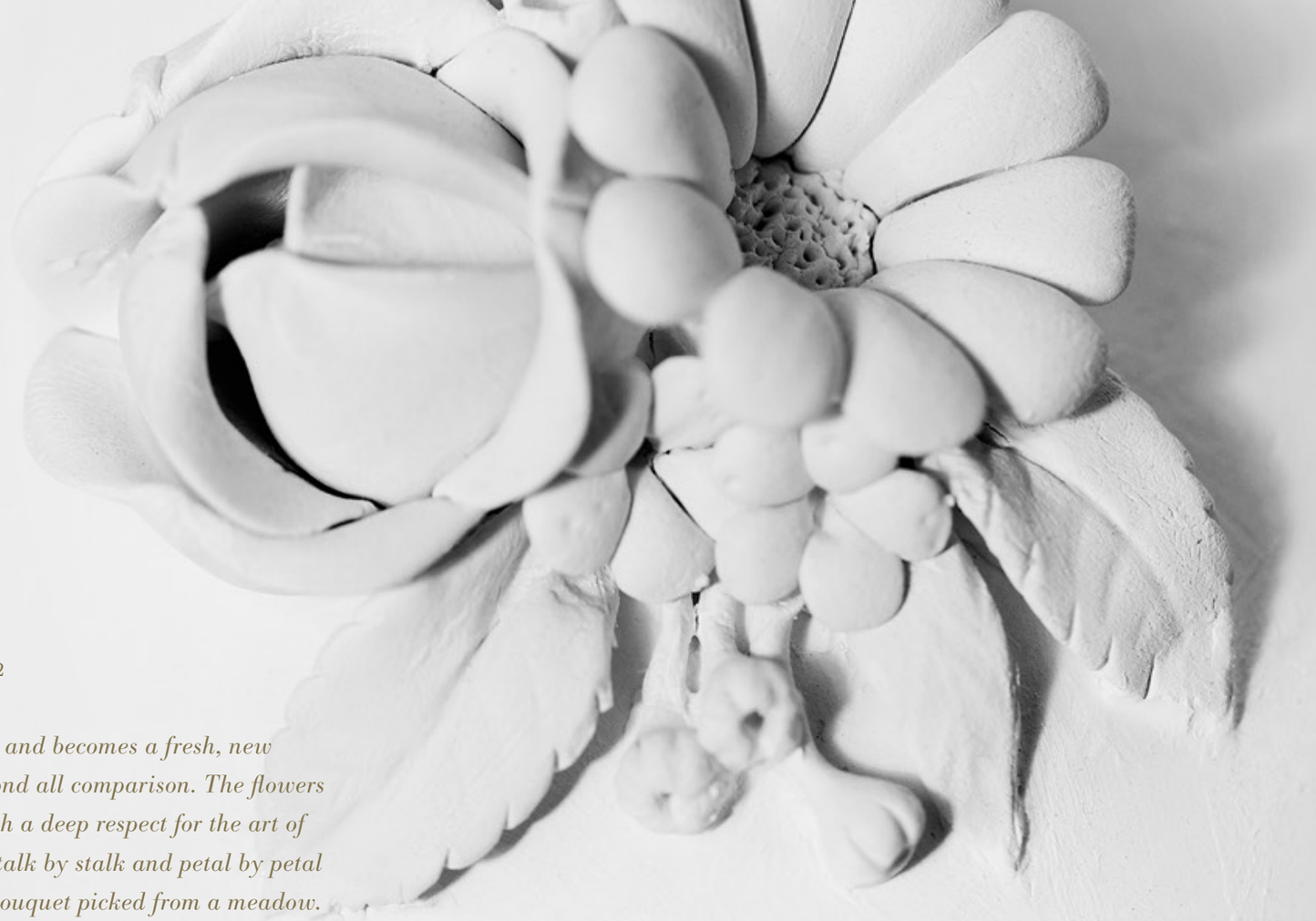
The open-work border of a Flora Danica plate is carved with a small tool while the porcelain is still soft.

· PRECISION AT EACH CUT ·

This carving requires the precision of a surgeon: an unerring, steady hand and a very keen eye. One single mistake and the work must be discarded.

· A UNIQUE TECHNIQUE ·

Parts of the service such as the fruit basket and ice bell require special carving. It is said that these two items have the most intricate carving.



TALE NO. 2

When a flower blooms, it gently unfurls and becomes a fresh, new piece of natural art, with form & colour beyond all comparison. The flowers of the Flora Danica service are created with a deep respect for the art of nature. Tenderly handcrafted, leaf by leaf, stalk by stalk and petal by petal until they begin to take form, as fresh as a bouquet picked from a meadow. An everlasting treasure, the beauty of Flora Danica will not wilt or fade, but remain a moment to treasure for a lifetime.

{THE ART OF FLOWER MODELLING}

· PETAL BY PETAL ·

Stalk by stalk, petal by petal, each flower is created carefully by skilled hands, using olive oil to keep the porcelain smooth, and then arranged into posies. These small petals and leaves decorate the lids and handles of several Flora Danica pieces.

· PRECISE DETAILING ·

Each little opening in the fruit basket is carved out from inside and the outside. One false cut, and the whole piece must be discarded.

· MASTER TECHNIQUE ·

The art of modelling is passed on from generation to generation - from master to novice. This way, the unique technique and skills have been kept alive for centuries.

38 FLOWERS

are used in the creation of the fruit basket.

THE MODELLING OF FLOWERS

TALE NO. 3

Once dipped in liquid glaze & fired, the porcelain is sealed for a lifetime.

{THE ART OF GLAZING & FIRING}

· FIRST FIRING AT 950 DEGREES ·

When each hole is carved, each handle casted and every flower and leaf are modelled, the pieces are fired for the first time at 950 degrees. The first firing is called the "biscuit firing"because it leaves the porcelain fragile, porous and easy to breaking, just like a biscuit.

· GLAZING PORCELAIN ·

All glazing is done by hand. Each individual piece is either dipped in large vats of glaze or glazed by hand with an airbrush. A special technique is used for dipping the porcelain into the glaze.

· 1,375 DEGREES ·

The glazing is followed by a second firing at 1,375 degrees celsius, which turns the porous biscuit into hard, white, gleaming porcelain. This seals the art piece so it will last for a lifetime.

· A CRUCIAL MOMENT ·

During the firing, the porcelain shrinks approximately 14 per cent.

This is a crucial moment, as there is a risk that the porcelain may crack or deform. It is also very important that there are no dust

TALE NO. 4

There are less than 20 painters
in the world who are able to undertake the delicate
Flora Danica hand-painting.

{THE ART OF DECORATING}

On the opposite page is a Viola Hirta L.
Painted free-hand by one of the Flora Danica painters.

· RARE SKILLS & CRAFTSMANSHIP FOR OVER 225 YEARS ·

The tradition and craft of painting Flora Danica is developed, refined and passed down through generations. It is still a skill that requires an immense amount of training by a master painter. The techniques involved require talent and a steady hand but also creativity, as there is artistic freedom in the unique decoration and customisation of each piece.

· A RARE 'SPECIES' ·

The art of painting Flora Danica is a rare talent; there are less than 20 Flora Danica artists in the entire world. The craft requires years of training, an in-depth understanding of botany as well as patience, as one must slowly cultivate and let the flowers 'bloom' on the fine porcelain. In addition, a deep understanding of colour combination is needed, as the colour palette of Flora Danica is highly complex.

· ARTISTIC LICENCE ·

In the creation of the chosen motif, there is plenty of artistic freedom for the overglaze painter, as there are many details to select and position harmoniously on the porcelain. This freedom means that no plate, dish or bowl is ever exactly the same as its predecessor, because each piece may have an extra leaf or a twist of the stem that makes it botanically accurate, yet but entirely unique.

THE HAND-PAINTING

· ONE FLOWER - THREE INTERPRETATIONS ·

These examples show the same botanical motif, executed slightly differently on each plate, according to the painter's artistic sense.

f/d

Step 1

THE FREE-HAND DRAWING

The Flora Danica painters will have a piece of white-glazed porcelain and a copy of one of the original motifs as a reference in front of them. With a chosen motif at hand, the painter begins to sketch on the white glaze with a pencil. The reproduction of a flower or a leafy tendril perfectly on porcelain requires an ability to draw free hand and a sense of proportion. When the painter is satisfied with the free-hand drawing, he will outline it with an

Step 2

THE LIGHTER COLOURS

Once the outline colour is dry, the first stage of colouring can begin. The painter begins at the light end of the colour scale: She will mix these colours herself, until exactly the right tone is found.

Step 3

DARK COLOURS

The porcelain then goes off for the third firing, and when it is returned to the painter, the colours will be deepend and with more contrast. This process is repeated until all nuances, reflections and colour differences are just right. When the motifs have the light, shading, colour and form as intended, the porcelain will be handed over to the gilder.

Step 4

FROM DARK BROWN TO SHINY GOLD

The gilder frames the pearls with the characteristic pink border. Then the string of gold pearls, the raised pearl bosses, the pearl border itself and the serrated rim are carefully painted with 24-carat gold. Initially, the gold appears dark brown but turns to mat gold after the firing. After another firing, the gold is polished and shines brightly like 24-carat gold.

TALE NO. 5

The 24-carat gold does not seem golden, but dark brown until it has been fired and meticulously polished.

{THE ART OF GILDING}

24-CARAT GOLD

IS APPLIED TO THE FLORA
DANICA SERVICE

2 LAYERS OF GOLD

ARE APPLIED TO EVERY PIECE

UNIQUE STROKES

OF HAND-PAINTING ARE CAREFULLY
APPLIED TO THE PORCELLAIN

THE GOLD

f/d

· THE UNIQUE SIGNATURE ·

Every single piece is signed by the responsible painters.

Crysanthemum segetum L.

THE FLOWERS' LATIN NAMES

ONE NAME FOR EACH FLOWER

SUX

THE PAINTER'S SIGNATURE

UNIQUE PERSONAL INITIAL

ZMX

THE GILDER'S SIGNATURE

UNIQUE PERSONAL INITIAL

ROYAL COPENHAGEN DENMARK

637

THE BACKSTAMP

BY ROYAL COPENHAGEN

f/d

TALE NO. 6

The ornate and characteristic border is the plate's jewellery.

{THE PEARL BORDER}

Flora Danica was painted on one of the early dinner services designed by the factory; the "Pearl" service from 1783. This was created in the Louis XVI style of its time, inspired by Roman ceramics excavated in the 18th century. Two of these Roman borders run along the edge of the service, the inner border a string of Roman ducats and the outer one representing the pearls.

THE PINK EDGE

A DELICATE PINK EDGE HIGHLIGHTS THE SHINY ROMAN DUCATS

THE PEARL SHAPE

CHARACTERISED BY ITS PEARLS AND THE SERRATED EDGE.

· RARE TALENTS ·

THE FLORA DANICA ARTISTS

The Flora Danica service is hand-painted in Denmark by Royal Copenhagen's skilled artists. There are less than 20 craftsmen and artists in the world, who are able to create Flora Danica.

THE FLORA DANICA TEAM

From left corner Tom Laboratory Technician since 1982, Ghita painter since 2000, Maiken painter since 1995, Susanne caster since 1976, Güzay painter since 2002, Anne painter since 1978, Tanja painter since 1997, Marlene painter since 2006, Lisa painter since 2014, Svend gilder since 1979, Marianne painter since 1979, Jacqueline painter since 2007, Heidi painter since 2006, Dorthe gilder since 1974, Sussi painter since 1977, Susan caster since 1977
In absentia: Zenia painter since 2005, Saima painter since 1997

No. 1019030 / 1147332
PLATES 7,5 CM

SELECTED PIECES
OF FLORA DANICA

Welcome to a presentation of the finest porcelain in the world.
For more detailed information,
please visit *floradanica.royalcopenhagen.com*

{THE TEA & COFFEE CONCEPT}

The Tea and Coffee concept was not part of the original Flora Danica service which was only a dinner service. In the 20th Century, however, the service was extended to meet the needs of modern customers.

Loyal to the shapes of the original Flora Danica dinner service, new pieces were designed, and today the Coffee and Tea sets are among the most popular items of this spectacular dinner service.

No. 1017378 / 1147126
COFFEE POT 70 CL

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1017573 / 1147059
MOCHA CUP & SAUCER 11 CL

No. 1017575 / 1147071
COFFEE CUP & SAUCER 17 CL

No. 1017589 / 1147394
CREAM JUG 12 CL

No. 1019016 / 1147156
SUGAR BOWL & COVER 10 CL

No. 1017580 / 1147159
SUGAR BOWL & COVER 60 CL

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1019028 / 1147257
CUSTARD CUP & STAND, TRIANGULAR 10 CL

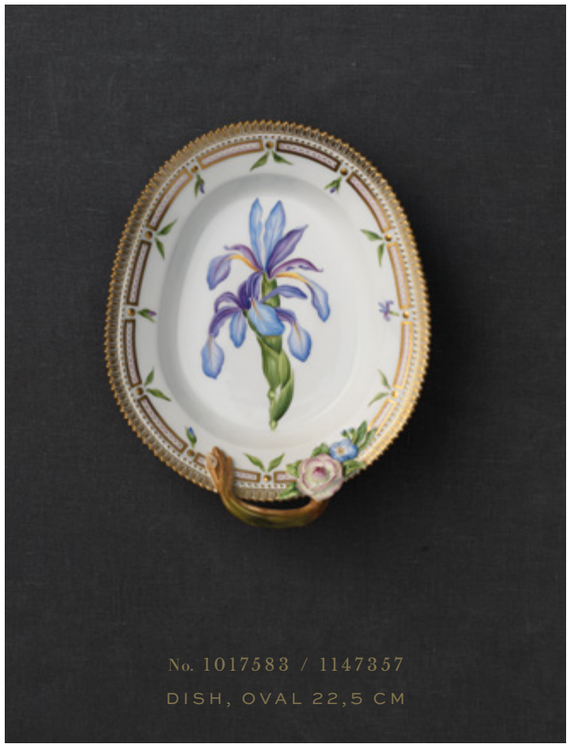
No. 1019027 / 1147253
CUSTARD CUP & STAND, ROUND 9 CL

f/d

No. 1019051 / 1147429
BOWL ON FOOT, TRIANGULAR 11,5 CM

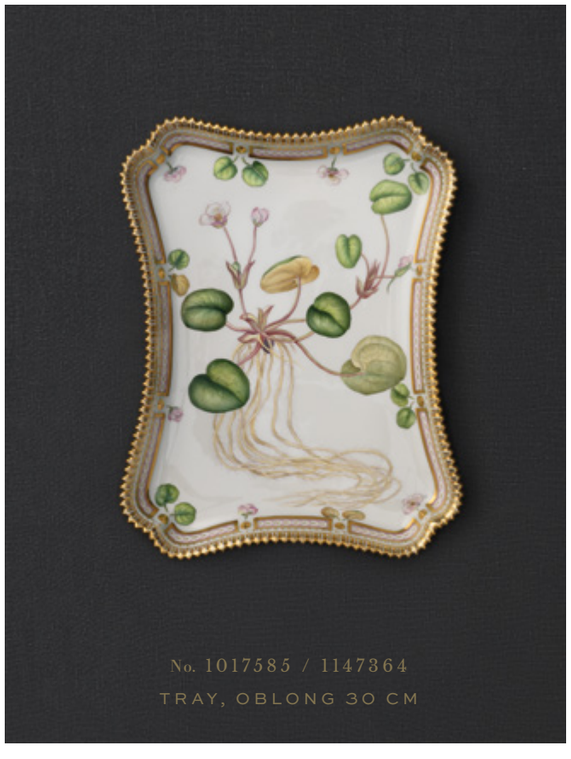
FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1017582 / 1147344
DISH, OBLONG 21 CM



No. 1017583 / 1147357
DISH, OVAL 22,5 CM

No. 1017584 / 1147363
TRAY, SQUARE 24,5 CM



No. 1017585 / 1147364
TRAY, OBLONG 30 CM

f/d

No. 1017596 / 1147615
PLATE, 14 CM

No. 1017597 / 1147617
PLATE, 17 CM

No. 1017598 / 1147621
PLATE, 20 CM

No. 1017599 / 1147622
PLATE, 22 CM

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1017595 / 1147604
PLATE, DEEP 22 CM

No. 1017600 / 1147624
PLATE, 25 CM

No. 1017593 / 1147572
BOWL, OVAL 80 CL

No. 1017594 / 1147574
BOWL, ROUND 70 CL

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1017603 / 1147687
WINE COOLER, ROUND 125 CL

FLORA DANICA PIECES

f/d

No. 1017586 / 1147372
DISH, OVAL 37 CM

No. 1019039 / 1147374
DISH, OVAL 47 CM

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1017581 / 1147187
TUREEN, OVAL 500 CL

{THE MONTEITH}

The Monteith bowl was used for cooling or washing wine glasses. When the original Flora Danica dinner service was made (1790-1802), there would only be one wine glass for each person at the table. The Monteith would contain crushed ice at the bottom, and a servant would be ready to take the guest's wine glass and wash/cool it in the Monteith in preparation for the next wine serving. The scalloped edges creates a rest for the wine glasses when not in use.

FLORA DANICA PIECES

No. 1019050 / 1147411

MONTEITH 380 CL

f/d

No. 1017601 / 1147635
PLATE, OPEN-WORK BORDER 23 CM

No. 1017602 / 1147637
PLATE, OPEN-WORK BORDER 25 CM

No. 1017587 / 1147381
DISH, OPEN-WORK BORDER 29 CM

No. 1017588 / 1147384
DISH, OPEN-WORK BORDER 36 CM

{OPEN-WORK BORDER PIECES}

When the first Flora Danica dinner service was produced, the dessert course would be the most exclusive element of the menu. Thus, the dessert pieces had to be very luxurious in appearance, which is why open-work border plates with incisions, and special dishes for the many desserts of the day were designed.

Today, the open-work border plates will be a part of any course at a Flora Danica dinner.

No. 1017590 / 1147397
FRUIT BASKET, ROUND 21,5 CM

{DESSERTS OF THE 18TH CENTURY}

The ice bell was intended for an ice cream dessert that would be an element in the dessert course. In the 18th century, ice cream was a great luxury. Not only because of the expensive ingredients, but also because one had to be wealthy enough to afford the storage of natural ice cut from frozen lake ice that would be used to keep things refrigerated and frozen in the summertime. Today this piece is used for serving ice cream and as a beautiful decorative piece.

FLORA DANICA PIECES

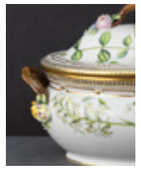
No. 1019029 / 1147286
ICE BELL & STAND 28 CM

f/d

{ORDERING FLORA DANICA}

For more information, please visit floradanica.royalcopenhagen.com or for assistance please contact floradanica@royalcopenhagen.com.

EXQUISITE PIECES TO CHOOSE FROM



The items

The Flora Danica service currently consists of approximately 40 different items. For the full range of items, please visit us online at floradanica.royalcopenhagen.com

CHOOSE BETWEEN 3,240 MOTIFS

The flowers of Flora Danica

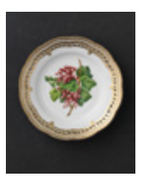
Images of the entire collection of Flora Danica motifs can be viewed online at the Royal Danish Library. For advice and suggestions in choosing your motif, please contact us at floradanica@royalcopenhagen.com.

THE FUNGI SERVICE

Specials

The fungi motifs are derived from the original Flora Danica encyclopaedia, however the painting technique for these motifs is different and more complex as compared with the painting of the plants. For this reason, Royal

THE FRUITS



Specials

Fruits were not part of the original Flora Danica motifs, but were inspired by the factory's famous painter, Klein who worked at Royal Copenhagen from 1825-1891 and specialised in painting fruits and berries. The Fruit decorations are painted on the Pearl service dating back to 1783, as is the case for Flora Danica.

f/d

{THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA}

Inspired by the famous Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale from 1835, the Princess and the Pea figurine epitomises the exclusive craftsmanship of Royal Copenhagen. It is the most prestigious overglaze figurine to be crafted and painted by the Flora Danica department. The two-part bonbonnière-style piece depicts a princess as beautiful and fragile as the fine porcelain from which she is made.

Created in 1911 by Gerhard Henning, one of Scandinavia's greatest sculptors, the Princess and the Pea represents the pinnacle of decorative art in Royal Copenhagen's history. The figurine, with its rich ornamentation and refined details, won the 1st Class Medal at the Salon in Paris in 1912, where it was generally deemed to be one of the finest pieces of European porcelain of the period.

f/d

ROYAL COPENHAGEN

PURVEYOR TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF DENMARK

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